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For Immediate Release: March 27, 2002

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### ***Kernan Announces Roadside Signs to Promote Tourism Locations***

INDIANAPOLIS—Hoosier Hospitality is hitting the road – the Crossroads of America, that is.

Lt. Governor Joe Kernan announced today that for the first time in Indiana's history tourist attractions will be featured on the state's blue motorist services signs.

New federal rules and regulations now allow for the signing of attractions to go along with the signage for gas, food, lodging and camping establishments. The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) also revised its administrative rules to include the attraction signs.

"This change gives us great opportunities to boost tourism in Indiana," said Kernan, who heads the Indiana Department of Commerce, which includes the Division of Tourism and Film Development. "The attraction signs will make traveling easier for tourists who are looking for a specific destination, and they will also alert other travelers to the number and diversity of venues available here."

Today's announcement marks the culmination of years of effort and work to include attractions as part of roadway signage. There are more than 225 highway interchanges in Indiana that can accommodate logo signs and nearly 1,000 individual businesses using logo signs today.

"The addition of attractions to motorist services signs fills an important void in what has become a very popular program," said INDOT Commissioner J. Bryan Nicol. "Our highways take potential visitors past many attractions and these new signs may encourage more people to stop and enjoy Indiana."

Several states participated in pilot programs for attraction signage. According to a 1996 Kentucky Transportation Cabinet Study in which more than 3,500 motorists were surveyed, 63 percent responded that "attraction signs assisted them in locating a specific attraction," and 29 percent said that "attraction signs influenced their decision to stop at the attraction."

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Attraction signage/add 1

Similarly, a 1998 Oregon Travel Information Council Study found that participating attractions that were surveyed said there was a 106 percent average increase in visitors brought in by highway signs. One attraction in Oregon was quoted in the report as saying, "This has been the single most effective thing we have done to increase business and to ease the finding of our attraction."

The new federal regulations allowing the signing of attractions are part of the Specific Motorist Service signs comprising the Logo program. The addition of the attraction signage to Indiana's Logo program will be made possible by the changes to the Indiana Administrative

Code (IAC) that are required for Indiana to be in compliance with the National Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). This process is nearly finished.

Drivers can expect to see the new attraction signs along the state's roadways within the next year.

The Indiana Department of Commerce's Tourism and Film Development Division stimulates visitor spending and economic growth by developing and promoting quality travel experiences in Indiana. The most recent economic impact study shows that the Indiana tourism industry supports more than 107,000 full-time jobs, generates more than \$5.9 billion in visitor spending annually and attracts more than 53 million guests each year.

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